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What Biden's cabinet picks show

written by John Parker

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Many organizations participated in the Dec. 12 International Human Rights Day: Uniting Beyond 2020 webinar, with speakers addressing the need for continued political struggle against policies of war and poverty promoted by both the Democratic and Republican parties in the U.S. and for international solidarity with working and poor people around the world in their struggle against imperialism. The event was organized by Anakbayan LA, CISPES LA, Students for Justice in Palestine/UCLA, the Palestinian Youth Movement, Unión del Barrio, the African Peoples Socialist Party, Bayan-SoCal, the Socialist Unity Party, the Student Labor Advocacy Group and others.

Following is the talk given by John Parker, representing the Socialist Unity Party, who spoke on Biden's proposed cabinet and administration and its essentially pro-business, pro-war, pro-cop, anti-worker character.



John Parker

Sometimes the ruling class will use the real issue and need for representation of the oppressed in a cynical way to further more oppression and exploitation against our class. That's what's going on with regard to Biden's new cabinet picks.

Records are being broken in his selection of the first Black woman as vice president, Kamala Harris, who is so pro-cop she's against even the most minimal demands to end police repression. And then there are cabinet appointments, including the first woman to run the Treasury Department, the first Black deputy treasury secretary and the first Black chair of the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA).

The fact remains, however, that the capitalist state needs repression to maintain inequality and exploitation of our class and, with regard to economics, their goal is to maintain profits and the exploitation that keeps us in poverty for the sake of their profits.

Biden made that clear during a campaign event to rich donors in the summer of 2019, where he said that "no one's standard of living will change, nothing would fundamentally change." At an event by the Poor People's Campaign that he attended, he said the opposite.

With regard to war, Biden's pick for U.S. secretary of defense is retired Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, who led the U.S. Central Command from 2013 to 2016 under Obama.

Austin would be the first African American secretary of defense.

Austin was in the U.S. military when, as reported by the Council of Foreign Relations, the U.S. dropped an average of 72 bombs every day — the equivalent of three an hour — in 2016. The council admitted that these numbers were low. Around the same time, a report from military officials admitted that twice as many civilians were killed as previously reported.

Austin is on the board of Raytheon, one of the country's most powerful defense contractors. Last year, Raytheon received more than \$16 billion in federal government contracts, the fourth-most of any company.

Imperialist war, however, is also a domestic war, and this may be why Susan Rice, former national security adviser under Obama, was chosen as Biden's pick for White House Domestic Policy Council. The job is supposed to, among other things, help fight racial injustice. However, Rice, along with another Biden pick, John Kerry, pushed Obama toward bombing. And, as national security adviser under Obama, Rice was an integral part of Obama's use of drones for assassinations and admittedly pushed Obama toward the war against and destruction of Libya.

According to an article in the Guardian, Obama increased drone strikes by ten times from the preceding former president Bush. To attempt to justify this legally, they categorized all males of military age in these regions as combatants, "making them fair game for remote-controlled killing."

If Rice was part of and encouraged this type of racial profiling with the use of military weapons, why would Rice be opposed to the profiling and frequent assassinations of Black and Brown children "of military age"? The extrajudicial killings and bombings that occurred during the Obama administration occurred largely in countries around East Africa, including Somalia and Yemen, and ignored mounting numbers of civilians killed on the African continent by U.S. terrorism.

Again, if Rice couldn't see the racial injustice of U.S. imperialist war, why would Rice see it in Black and Brown occupied communities?

Regarding climate change, unfortunately it's business as usual with the appointment of John Kerry as the head of Biden's climate change effort. Kerry told National Public Radio that he was relying on the market — the same market that failed miserably in supplying health and safety equipment during this pandemic.

The market is in search of profits, not the saving of humanity. And the two goals are often irreconcilable. The ruling class is willing to run humanity over the cliff of nonexistence with its irrational allegiance to capitalism and profit. This explains Biden's cabinet, which will be predominantly made up of the enablers of capitalism's many diseases, along with war criminals who belong in a jail and not in office. Therefore, it will take a unified movement of our working class to promote and fight for a society that puts the control of the resources and the land and factories in the hands of the people, not the profiteers. That's why we must fight for socialism.



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